



GARDEN COURT CHAMBERS

Joanne Cecil KC

YEAR OF CALL: 2005 | YEAR OF SILK: 2024



Joanne Cecil KC combines a mixed serious crime and public law practice with criminal justice-related judicial review and civil litigation in the civil liberties sphere. She has a strong appellate practice both domestically and internationally, appearing at all levels including the Supreme Court.

Joanne has developed an expertise in strategic litigation and acting for intervenors. She has been instructed in every significant test case at the appellate levels concerning juvenile justice in recent years, resulting in significant changes to the law.

Joanne was the winner of the Legal Aid Barrister of the Year category of the Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year Awards (LALYs) 2019.

"Joanne is a superb, hardworking, skillful barrister. She has secured bail for clients against the odds. She successfully appealed a conviction in circumstances where the evidence was overwhelming."

"Joanne has exceptional client care skills and huge ability. She is widely – and justifiably – respected."

LEGAL 500, 2021 (CRIME)

"A star performer. She has an encyclopaedic knowledge of the criminal law relating to children."

LEGAL 500, 2020

"Has the ability to weigh legal problems and create cogent solutions for her clients."

LEGAL 500, 2019

"Thorough and diligent with an impressive grasp of the law."

LEGAL 500, 2019

If you would like to get in touch with Joanne please contact the clerking team:

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You can also contact Joanne directly:

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CRIMINAL APPEALS

Joanne has developed an expertise in strategic litigation and acting for intervenors. She has been instructed in every significant test case at the appellate levels concerning juvenile justice in recent years, resulting in significant changes to the law. Most recently she was instructed by Just For Kids Law in the joint enterprise case of Jogee before the Supreme Court.

NOTABLE CASES

Past notable cases can be viewed below. [Click here to see a list of recent notable cases.](#)

***R v Jogee* [2016] UKSC 8**

Historic joint judgment of Supreme Court and Privy Council. Joint enterprise.

***R (OP) v Secretary of State for Justice* [2014] EWHC 1944 (Admin), [2014] WLR (D) 348**

Test case concerning the lack of provision of registered intermediaries for vulnerable and child defendants in criminal trials by the MoJ as compared to their provision for Crown witnesses and complainants. Successful. Court held unlawful.

***R (HC) v Secretary of State for the Home Department* [2013] EWHC 982 (Admin), [2014] 1 W.L.R. 1234; [2013] Crim. L.R. 918; [2013] A.C.D. 94**

High profile landmark test case concerning the anomalous position of 17-year-olds being treated as adults within the criminal justice system (excluded from protections of PACE when detained in police custody). Successful. PACE Code C held unlawful and in breach of Article 8 interpreted in the light of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Resulted in change of the law. Considered most significant appellate criminal law and child rights case of 2013.

***Sanchez-Llamas v Oregon* 126 S.Ct. 2669 (2006)**

U.S. Supreme Court, Vienna Convention on Consular Relations and Article 36 rights in criminal proceedings. Brief of Amici Curiae, the European Union and members of the international community.

***Medellin v Dretke* 544 U.S. 660 (2005)**

Vienna Convention on Consular Relations and Article 36 rights in criminal proceedings. Brief of Amici Curiae, the European Union and members of the international community.

***Roper v Simmons* 543 US 551 (2005)**

Juvenile death penalty ruled unconstitutional. Brief of Amici Curiae, the European Union and members of the international community.

***Hamdan v Rumsfeld* 126 S.Ct. 2749 (2006)**

US Supreme Court, legality of military commissions regarding Guantanamo and enemy combatants.

CRIMINAL DEFENCE

Joanne's practice covers serious crime. She is currently instructed by the FCO and separately the EU and Council of Europe in two seminal US Supreme Court criminal cases. Joanne was previously instructed by the EU, Council of Europe in *Roper v Simmons*, 543 U.S. 551 (juvenile death penalty ruled unconstitutional).

Her expertise in criminal justice can be seen in her appointment as an Independent Commissioner on the Legal Aid Review Commission (the Bach Commission). Joanne is also as an elected member of the Criminal Bar Association, Bar Human Rights Commission and has been appointed to the FCO Consular Panel for expert assistance in criminal cases in overseas jurisdictions.

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R v Slade, Baxter and Pearman, Sheffield Crown Court

The defendants were convicted of a high-profile conspiracy to murder in 2009. They appealed against their conviction in 2014. The conviction was quashed but the Court of Appeal ordered a retrial. In the retrial the defence made submissions as to unfair disclosure and as to abuse of process. Before the disclosure and abuse arguments had all concluded, three weeks into the trial, the Crown dropped the case by offering no further evidence and inviting the jury to acquit. This was a direct result of the defence arguments, which argued that the Crown could not proceed. This was a major reversal for the Crown. They had prosecuted the defendants at trial and on appeal for eight years before conceding that it was wrong to have done so.

The defendants were described as highly sophisticated premier league criminals and included 'Yorkshire's crime boss'.

R v Lawrence, Central Criminal Court

High profile, multi-handed conspiracy to rob. Defendants wore burkhas to conduct the robberies. Complex cell site and tracker evidence.

R v S, Central Criminal Court

Eight handed conspiracy to rob cash in transit (CIT). Case concerns an undercover flying squad operation targeting an organised criminal gang conducting CIT robberies in London and Bournemouth and targeted smash and grab robberies of Knightsbridge stores, such as Louis Vuitton. Substantial observation, surveillance, tracker and telephone (cell site) evidence.

R v Gomez, Central Criminal Court and Maidstone

Sole counsel for D1 in two large-scale, multi-handed multi-million pound conspiracies to import cocaine into

the UK from Colombia and the Dominican Republic (alleged in excess of 100kg). One heard at the Central Criminal Court and the other at Maidstone Crown Court (SOCA prosecution). Involved cell site, observations, expert forensic evidence etc. D1 was at the top of the chain. Subsequently case heard on appeal at Court of Appeal.

R v A

Sole counsel in multi-handed child sex case. Represented 13-year-old boy with learning difficulties accused of sexually assaulting two young brothers (5 and 6 years old) and inciting oral rape along with two other boys. Case dismissed following legal argument.

R v Khan, Nottingham Crown Court

Grooming and multiple rape of white vulnerable girls in care.

R v Husain, Inner London Crown Court

Leading Junior. S.18 Offences Against the Person Act (OAPA) acid attacks and stabbings in revenge attacks. In context of rape allegations (male). Defendant suffers from paranoid schizophrenia and currently detained under mental health provisions. Initially unfit to plead, subsequent medication resulted in finding of fitness to plead. Both defendant and Crown witnesses gave evidence with assistance of intermediaries.

YOUTH JUSTICE & CHILD RIGHTS

Jo has a wealth of experience in representing children. She is renowned for having been instructed in many test cases relating to children in the criminal justice system which have resulted in significant changes in the law. Most recently, Jo acted in a *Just for Kids Law's* case *R v TI*, a leading High Court case on intermediaries for children. Prior to working as a barrister in the UK, Jo was instrumental in the fight against the use of the death penalty for under-18s in the US which culminated in the case of *Roper v Simmons* which abolished the death penalty for those who were children at the time they committed an offence.

Jo is a Board Member of Just for Kids Law, the Standing Committee for Youth Justice and formerly of ROLE UK and was appointed as an independent commissioner on the 'Bach' Access to Justice Commission. She is a lead facilitator for the Advocacy and the Vulnerable, sits on the Ministry of Justice's Working Group on Youth Advocacy and is currently devising a youth advocacy course with the ICCA for national roll out.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND PUBLIC LAW

Joanne's practice covers public law. She has been instructed in every significant test case at the appellate levels concerning juvenile justice in recent years, resulting in significant changes to the law.

NOTABLE CASES

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INTERNATIONAL CRIME AND CONFLICT LAW

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BACKGROUND

Prior to being called to the Bar of England and Wales, Jo worked for several years in Washington, DC and has extensive experience in international human rights cases. She continues to consult on human rights issues to governments, international organisations (e.g. EU, UNICEF, UN) and NGOs.

Joanne is appointed to the Equality and Human Rights Commission's preferred Panel of Counsel (Panel A).

EDUCATION

LLB (Hons), Cardiff University

BVC, Inns of Court School of Law

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Criminal Bar Association (CBA)

Administrative Law Bar Association (ALBA)

Human Rights Law Association (HRLA)

Bar Human Rights Committee (BHRC)

American Society of International Law (ASIL)

Amicus

Young Fraud Lawyers Association

Female Fraud Forum

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